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HAUTE DE SAVOIES' IDYLLIC GETAWAY



🕒 Wed, Sep 04, 2024

Overlooking the Savoie region capital of Chambéry, France, the stunning Château de Candie offers a luxurious and tranquil, pace less stay.

Making my way up the lush tree-lined drive, Purple Summer's Château De Candie gently emerges from its ivy-laden walls, 14th century architecture of the Savoie region still dominating the building in 2024. Great to see - I hate these buffed-up chateaus that have the egregious designs of a Walt Disney storyboard, done up to such an awful extent that the toxic ooze of gaudiness leaks out of every faux panel. This place has class, tons of it, showing the utmost resistance to so-called 'similar' properties that bombard social media with jumped up claims of tradition and history - Château de Candie, thankfully, is the real deal.



Arriving like a Lord en le grande tour in the Châteaux' personal Merc, combined with the driveway's pebbly topping, I get an overwhelming feeling of 'aristocrats be here' - or at least used to be. The history of the Château is significant, harking back to an era when France was dominated by dukedoms, war and dynastic rule. The House of Candia held residence here circa 14-16 centuries with close ties to the then Swiss Confederation - renowned figures, such as François de Candie were Viscount of Geneva; Louis Philip Carel de Candie van Nasseau-LaLecq was born in Lausanne and died in Vaud - the lush history of the Château is ever evident.



Idyllic setting, luxury interiors

Set in six hectares of idyllic landscaped gardens, boasting its own vineyard, a tree enclosed outdoor pool and enjoying total respect from locals, this yesteryear charm-draped residence has me agog. Entering via the snug, almost hidden entrance, opulent features adorn the corridors, literally entrancing me with *their* undivided attention, as if these delightful curios de decor know who's in their domain - maybe I'm the curiosity, an odd one at that.



My room is one of the aptly and not exaggeratedly named Chambres Prestige. Regal comfort at its pinnacle, this would be the Presidential Suite in any other big brand 5-star offering. Incredibly spacious with antique furnishings, the room boasts a highly decorative ensuite with a separate WC.

A huge bed (how on Earth did they get it in the room??? Savoie magic?) with beautifully embroidered covers atop pure, quality, rich cotton sheets that, in turn, lie upon the comfiest mattress - in the universe - seriously, I will take the mattress equivalent of the Pepsi challenge with anyone who thinks they can prove otherwise.



Rustic cuisine, perfection of taste

I was surprised at the menu. I'm often dumfounded by hotels and restaurants that offer unnecessarily complicated, so-called fine dining menus with so much to offer they end up being harvesters of their own doom - long wait times, customers suddenly realising they're being ripped off in the name of haute cuisine and Michelin star chasing chefs endlessly trying to impress the unimpressible. Château De Candie couldn't be further away from this ugly world. A faultless, simple menu is offered based on the food of the region going back generations. Traditionally prepared and served as described, I'm loving it - as do the locals, and that, to me, says it all really.



The menu by Chef Badara Gueye at the recently refurbished La Cantine, the Chateau's celebrated restaurant, celebrates fresh, locally sourced ingredients. From hearty starters to exquisite mains and delectable desserts, each dish is a testament to the chef's skill and passion. The flavours are balanced, the presentation is impeccable, and the portions are generous. My personal highlights include the foie gras poele served with Armagnac and chutney de loire with brioche, mouillettes (egg in a mushroom sauce) and regional steak. The service is effortless and above all friendly and relaxed. No airs and graces here.



A unique place with a faithful clientele, British manager Katie aptly sums up the Château's enduring appeal. "It's such a pleasant place to work; it's very relaxed. The owners are devoted to staff happiness, which is reflected in our attitude to our treasured clients and guests. We have a lot of repeat visitors who tend to be affluent, seasoned travellers looking for that extra bit of luxury and privacy the Chateau offers."



Fellow Brit, Jemima, currently working as a receptionist, concurs: "We're one big happy family, committed to ensuring the guests experience the best we offer in terms of service and assistance at all times, ensuring a flawless stay."

The combination of chilled-out attentive staff, an eloquent nod to its intriguing past, and an unwavering commitment to the traditions of the Haut Savoie region leaves me enamoured with Purple Summer's Château De Candie. Back to the Chateau? 100%.



Out and about

The medieval town of Chambéry is a short drive away. Steeped in history, well worth a half day visit.

Lac Du Balac

France's deepest lake has cycle and running routes on its bank and various picnic areas.



Contact:

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<https://purplesummer.com/destinations/accommodation-in-the-french-alps/chateau-de-candie/>

Getting there:

London Heathrow to Geneva with BA (from £160 rtn), then a 90-minute trip by road to Chateau De Candie with its guest-only dedicated transfer service.